

Southeastern Baptist Theological
Seminary Library
Wake Forest, N. C. 27587

The Baptist Informer

LIGHT  TRUTH

Official Organ of the General Baptist Convention of North Carolina, Inc.
Voice of 350,000 Baptists

VOLUME 91

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA, NOVEMBER, 1969

NUMBER 11

102nd ANNUAL CONVENTION MAKES HISTORY



Left to Right—Dr. C. R. Edwards, First Vice President, Dr. John W. White, President and Dr. O. L. Serrill, Executive Secretary.

The General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina held one of the greatest sessions ever in its 102nd year old history, October 28-30 in Greenville. Hosting the meeting was the historic Sycamore Hill Baptist Church, the Reverend B. B. Felder, pastor. Pastor Felder and his people more than pulled out the red carpet for each delegate in attendance at the Convention.

A well planned program emerged around the theme: "Christian Unity and the American Crises." The Annual sermon was forcefully and uniquely delivered by the Reverend B. L. Rich of Fayetteville. Addressing himself to the theme of the convention, Brother Rich set a high mark to reach for all annual sermons in the future. The theme address was among the best yet and was given by the Reverend J. D. Ellis, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Wilson. Ellis provoked much thought in this well planned address.

Dr. O. L. Sherrill gave an outstanding report as the convention's Executive Secretary. He reported

substantial increases in every phase of our baptist work both in the state and abroad. Timely reports were given for the General Board by Dr. J. Ray Butler of Wilmington, chairman; Laymen's League, Frank Marshall of Asheville, President; Usher's Convention, Arthur Williams, Laurinburg, president; Woman's Convention, Mrs. Vera Slade, Ahsokie, President; Sunday School Convention, E. M. Butler, Wilmington, president and B.T.U. Convention, J. T. Hawkins, Durham, president.

After a moving president's address, Dr. John W. White of Asheville was re-elected to serve another term as the Chieftain of General Baptists.

Other reports highlighted were made by J. C. Harris, Statistician; W. B. Lewis, Historian; George W. Dudley, Baptist Informer; T. A. Watkins, Trustees; H. V. Bryant, Central Orphanage and Corbin Cooper, Department of Interracial Cooperation; J. M. Kennedy of Charlotte and Chairman of the Moderator's led the Moderators in an impressive hour. The Wednesday afternoon sermon was delivered with great thought and power by the Reverend P. B. Barnett of Charlotte.

Dr. King V. Cheek recently elected president of Shaw University represented the University with a moving address. He was accompanied to Greenville by the Shaw University Chorale Society under the able direction of Dr. Harry Gilsmythe.

On the final day of the convention, a powerful address was delivered by Dr. Wendell C. Somerville, Executive Secretary of the Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention. The proposed constitution was carefully read to the convention by K.O.P. Goodwin, chairman of the Constitution Committee; Charles W. Ward and George Dudley. After the reading, the convention adopted the constitution as its guide. The convention then adjourned to meet with the United Metropolitan Baptist Church, Winston-Salem in 1970.

THE BAPTIST INFORMER
ORGAN OF THE GENERAL BAPTIST STATE
CONVENTION OF NORTH CAROLINA, INC.

STAFF

GEORGE W. DUDLEY, *Editor*
MRS. B. W. HERNDON, *Secretary*
Contributing Editors
C. R. EDWARDS
H. L. MITCHELL
COLEMAN W. KERRY, *Promotional Director*
OTIS HAIRSTON
S. A. RAPER

Published the fifteenth of each month at Raleigh, North Carolina. Second Class
Paid at Raleigh, N. C.

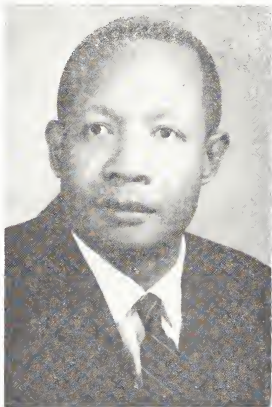
Address all communication for publication and inquiry to Baptist Informer, Baptist Headquarters, 603 S. Wilmington Street, Raleigh, North Carolina 27601.

SUBSCRIPTION \$2.00 PER YEAR

**General
Convention Roster**

J. W. White, *President*
C. R. Edwards, *1st Vice-President*
A. D. Moseley, *2nd Vice-President*
C. A. Hart, *3rd Vice-President*
J. J. Johnson, *4th Vice-President*
Coleman W. Kerry, *Recording Secretary*
O. L. Sherrill, *Executive Secretary*
J. H. Ferguson, *Assistant Secretary*
W. B. Lewis, *Historian*
J. C. Harris, *Statistician*

**DRAYTON HEADS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**



Dr. Jerry Drayton, pastor, New Bethel Baptist Church, Winston-Salem was elected during the Greenville meeting of the General Baptist Convention's Executive Committee to serve as chairman. He succeeds Dr. A. Jackson Ryans of Charlotte who served faithfully for several years in this capacity.

Drayton comes to this position well prepared. He received his A.B., Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia; B.D., School of Religion, Howard University, Washington, D. C.; a certificate in clinical psychiatry, Bowman Gray School of Medicine, Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Honorary Doctor of Divinity, Virginia Theological Seminary and College, Lynchburg, Virginia.

Drayton is also acting president of the interracial Board of Directors of the Winston-Salem Urban League; Vice Chairman of the interracial Forsyth County Alcoholism Program; member of the Mayor's Goodwill Committee, and chairman of its Grievance Committee; member of the executive board of the Winston-Salem Branch of the National Confer-

ence of Christians and Jews, Inc.; member of the Executive Committee of the interracial Forsyth Clergy Association, and chairman of its committee on Religion and Family Life; member of the committee on National and World Affairs of the North Carolina Council of Churches; member of the administrative staff of the North Carolina Council of Churches Migrant Program, and a member of its Personnel Committee.

Along denominational lines, he is chairman of the Executive Board of the Rowan Baptist Association; member of the Educational Board of the National Baptist Convention, Inc.

For the past twenty-five years has pastored North Carolina's largest Negro congregation.

**The Relevancy of Organized Religion
A Beginning Conference**

Forty-eight nationally prominent religious and lay leaders concluded a three-day session of talks, small group dialogue and debate in Hudson, Wisconsin recently without agreeing on a specific agenda for the future — main aim of the conference — but instead handed that task to a special committee named by the group. The first committee meeting will be held in Chicago early in November.

The conference, on the Relevancy of Organized Religion — an Agenda for the Future, was sponsored by the George D. Dayton Foundation (he founded The Dayton Company, now part of the Dayton Hudson national retailing organization). Presenting papers at the conference were Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, Geneva, Switzerland, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches; Dr. Charles S. Davis, Professor of Theology at the University of Edmonton in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada; Rev. Andrew M. Greeley, Program Director of the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago; Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, Director of Inter-religious Affairs, American Jewish Committee, New York; and Rev. Andrew Young, Executive Vice

(Continued on Page 8)

CHURCH CELEBRATES 98TH ANNIVERSARY

By R. D. ARMSTRONG
Telegram Writer

The 98th Anniversary of Mount Zion First Baptist Church, Rocky Mount was observed Sunday, November 16, during a series of special services and events at the church located on West Thomas Street. The anniversary sermon was delivered by the pastor, the Reverend George W. Dudley, during the morning worship hour.

Following the morning service the annual Fellowship Hour was held in the Lawrence Memorial Fellowship Hall at which time Mrs. P. V. Patterson gave the history of the church and 15 ladies were honored in the "Fifty Year Membership Club."

Mrs. Patterson traced the beginning of the church from 1871 until the present time. She posed the question to those attending the fellowship dinner, "what are we celebrating here today?"

Is it a building made of brick, stone and clay, a place to go, something to do, something that's pretty, modern and new?

It is much more than that, Mrs. Patterson asserted. It means that we pause and give thanks to God for strength and guidance from the very beginning. We pause, she declared, to salute those who put God in the forefront.

Mrs. Patterson went on to point out that during the 98-years the church has been CONTRIBUTING religious leadership to this community there had been 17 pastors to serve the congregation. She went on to name the pastors and as each name was given, Deborah Pittman, a youthful member of Mount Zion, lighted a candle for each.

Mrs. Patterson then mentioned the progress the church had made under the pastoral leadership of the present pastor, the Reverend George W. Dudley, who came to the local church in the summer of 1958. She also told of the early days when the church held its baptizing in Tar River just below the dam at Rocky Mount Mills.

Also during the history, Mrs. Patterson spoke of the number of mortgages that the church had burned during its 98-years of existence. She stated that these mortgages were the result of improvements and expansion of the church during those years.

A unique part of the Fellowship Hour was done by remote control when a voice, on tape, came from a miniature constructed church building told of the place the church has in a community and of the hopes and aspirations of the future.

The ladies honored for having been members of the church for 50-years or more were Mrs. Bessie

Bryant, Mrs. Evangeline Gray, Mrs. Teaner Ellison, Mrs. Geneva Lewis, Mrs. Mary Harris, Mrs. Blanche Hines, Mrs. Dora Lane, Mrs. Blanche Hunter, Mrs. Anna Wooten, Mrs. Alice Edge, Mrs. Addie Byrd, Mrs. Elnora Penny, Mrs. Marie Stovall, Miss Daisy Sessoms, Miss Mary McIntyre and Mrs. Naomi Debnam.

The ladies were presented golden corsages by Mrs. Corrie Braswell who paid them special recognition during a brief program following the dinner.

At the conclusion of the hour Reverend Dudley challenged the membership for a larger place in which to hold its 100th anniversary two years hence. He also gave thanks to those who had been actively engaged in the progress the church has made during his eleven years as pastor.

The anniversary evening hour was conducted by the young people of the church and they used as their theme, "A Liberalized Church Between Now and Year 2000". Miss Kathy Dudley, daughter of the pastor, presided over the evening session.

WE SUPPORT NATIONAL UNITY

In 1965 Dr. J. H. Jackson, president of the National Baptist Convention, U. S. A., Incorporated, wrote and recommended to the convention "A Call For National Unity." The 10 point document called upon all Americans to be loyal to the principles of the Federal Constitution and to seek change through the processes provided therein.

It was his position that the struggle for personal and group rights must be coupled with accepted responsibilities to uphold and to defend the principles of the supreme law of the land, and to obey the nation's rules of justice and freedom to all. For to concentrate on what belongs to individual citizens and groups without loyalty to the democratic principles of the nation, would divide the peoples of the country into factions and warring camps that would weaken and disrupt the nation.

This program of national unity was accepted by the convention by unanimous vote. It was then shared with the governors of several states, mayors of cities and many city councils — many of whom endorsed it wholeheartedly. On March 27, 1969, Dr. Jackson visited the president of the United States and spoke to him on national unity, and President Nixon subsequently gave his wholehearted endorsement to the drive.

The 6,300,000 members of the National Baptist Convention welcome Bob Hope and his committee into this national fraternity for unity. We also applaud Mr. H. Ross Perot of Texas, for his efforts for national unity as expressed in a hundred of our leading newspapers across the nation. It is our hope that millions of the silent majority will lift their voices now in the defense of peace, justice, freedom, and the UNITY OF THE NATION.



ALEXANDER NAMED DEAN OF DIVINITY SCHOOL AT SHAW UNIVERSITY

On August 1, 1969 the Reverend James Z. Alexander was named Dean of The Shaw Divinity School and Director of Church Relations at Shaw University. The Reverend Alexander was formerly Shaw's University Minister.

In his capacity of Dean of the Divinity School he will foster the development of a bold, imaginative, and relevant program of theological education designed to produce ministers who can intelligently confront the challenges of contemporary society, effectively **do ministry** on the current scene, and who are committed to the advance of God's Kingdom without delay. Concomitant with these purposes is a quality of theological education that will eventuate in full accreditation of the Shaw Divinity School by the American Association of Theological Schools.

As Director of Church Relations the Reverend Alexander will direct the development of programs that will extend the services of the University to the churches of North Carolina and the nation and relate the University to the church in significant and meaningful ways.

An aspect of the Church Relations program already in partial operation in North Carolina is a co-operative venture of Shaw and associations, ministers, and churches of the General Baptist State Convention in the establishment of educational centers for ministers and laymen in selected areas

across North Carolina. Areas in which centers are already in operation or in which initial efforts to establish such centers have been made are: Warrenton, North Carolina, New Bern, North Carolina, and Stanly, North Carolina. A Night Class for Ministers is currently in operation on the Shaw campus. It meets each Tuesday evening at 7:30, October through May.

A series of symposia are projected at the University during the 1969-70 academic year. Issues to be examined include:

1. The Changing Role of the Minister in Relation to the Local Church and Community.
2. The Impact of the Communications Media (TV and Radio, etc.) on the Life Style of the Church and an Exploration of the Church's Utilization of the Communications Media in Developing A More Effective Ministry.
3. An analysis of the Continuously Changing Urban and Rural Community and the Implications of these Changes for the Life of the Church.
4. Church Administration — with a view toward replacing the present dysfunctionality of much church operation with more efficient and effective methods.
5. Developing a Broader Program of Christian Education and Training Designed to Embrace the Surging Ethnic Consciousness in the Black Community.
6. Youth View Of The Black Church. Designed to afford youth an opportunity to ventilate their criticisms of the Black Church and to offer constructive suggestions for making the Black Church a more relevant and viable Institution.

An annual conference of a week's duration involving ministers, Missionaries, and young people is already in vogue at Shaw. It meets each year during the month of June.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE BAPTIST INFORMER

Be Informed — Know Your Baptist Family

Subscription Rates — \$2.00 per year

Send your subscription NOW to the

BAPTIST INFORMER

603 S. Wilmington Street

Raleigh, North Carolina 27601

MAKING THE MOST GOOD OF THE NEW GOD AND COUNTRY PROGRAM IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

By ROY ADELBURG

For the past five years, our denominational representatives on the National Church Commission on Scouting have been working on a top-priority project: A complete revision of the Boy Scout **God and Country Program**. This was recently completed and the new material will shortly be off the presses.

The new God and Country Program is a program of the church in which a Scout, working in a one-to-one relationship with a counselor, experiences growth in his understanding of what it means to take responsibility as a Christian in many areas of life. Fresh in concept, approach, and application, the new program bears little resemblance to the old "award" program. As a tool offering the latest insights into the learning and growth processes, it has great potential as an effective extension of the Christian Education program of the local church.

A PROGRAM OF THE CHURCH

In past years there has been a feeling on the part of some churches that the God and Country idea was something imposed upon the church by the Boy Scouts of America. Let it be said here that the new God and Country program belongs to the church. It was designed by the church for use by the church as a way of working effectively in the lives of its members who are Boy Scouts. As such, it does not take the place of Christian Education. It provides no magic "bypass" to the normal courses of study which the church requires of its young people. What it does do is offer an opportunity to Scouts who are church members to put what they have learned in the Christian education process to work in their daily lives and to experience real responsibility as young Christians. As such, the program becomes an extension of the local church's program of Christian Education.

A PROGRAM OF INDIVIDUAL GROWTH

In the new God and Country program, the Scout works in a one-to-one basis with a counselor. This is not out of whim or fancy on the part of those who developed the program. Recognizing that each individual has different tastes, interests, abilities, and levels of understanding, the program allows each boy to make certain choices within its framework. He chooses to take responsibilities which interest him and which are within his capabilities. He chooses how much time he will spend in each phase of the program, possibly taking as long as two years for the total experience! He chooses how deeply he

wishes to become involved in any of his responsibilities. All of these choices require some guidance, hence the need for a counselor. Because his choices provide for limitless variations in the program, the counselor must deal with each boy separately in his own pattern of individual growth. The program materials make their strongest emphasis in giving help and guidance to the counselor. Each church will have to choose how it will handle the counseling situation. Wherever possible he should be the minister, but where there are many boys involved in the program, this is impracticable and more than one counselor will be required. Program materials take this into consideration and offer many guidelines and techniques for the less experienced counselor.

NOT AN AWARD-ORIENTED PROGRAM

Instead of offering an award for a series of "religious good deeds" as an incentive, the new program offers the adventure of exploring, through personal experience, new horizons of faith in action. The challenge of the program itself, rather than an award, becomes the motivating factor. While activities and service are a part of the program, they are expanding into opportunities for boys to come really committed to taking genuine responsibilities as Christians, not only within the church, but within the various communities of which they are a part; ranging from the familiar to the new, from local to worldwide, and from the present to the future. If that sounds like a lot . . . it is. It will take an entirely new approach on the part of the church offering the program to fully realize the program's potential.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Space here does not permit a detailed analysis of the steps and areas covered by the program. The God and Country materials are now or will shortly be available through your local Protestant or Religious Relationship Committee on Scouting of your local Scout Trading Post. The minister, Christian Education Committee, and/or the sponsoring committee of your church's Scout troop or Explorer post should study the material and decide how your church may make the best use of the opportunity. If your church does not sponsor a Scouting unit, there are undoubtedly Boy Scouts who are a part of your church family. They should have the opportunity to go through the program in their home church.

Above all, as your church approaches the new God and Country Program, involve people in planning for it who can openly approach something new and fresh without being tied down by old approaches . . . people who can see a new thing and do it. How well your church succeeds in the God and Country Program will depend in large measure, on the enthusiasm and commitment of its leadership.

THE MUD CREEK BAPTIST ASSOCIATION OBSERVES ITS 101ST SESSION

By MRS. V. T. GLENN

The Mud Creek Baptist Association observed its 101st annual session on August 21, 22 and 24, 1969, at the Flat Rock Baptist assembly hall, Flat Rock, N. C. The theme was "The Living Church in a Changing Age." The moderator, Rev. H. B. Ferguson, presided. The Reports from the past year's work were given.

The theme address given by The Rev. Webster Lytle was outstanding. Some of the highlights were: (and I quote) "Today is the most challenging, changing time in all history. The greatest challenge being, to find a way to live together on this planet rather than exploring others. What really is the living church? The living church is the vehicle for spreading the gospel. It must seek to move with a changing age, remembering always that God cannot and will never change. It was never intended to be a place where we can hide our faces from the forces of a changing world. When we cease to see the human suffering around us we are a dying church. The church now tends toward meeting, eating and dismissing while the young people are moving on. Many of our tactics must be changed. We must teach our young people how to meet their lion's den; how to meet their Goliath, and other such obstacles as they must meet in the changing age."

To be a living church we must walk in faith, love and tell the whole truth not trusting our limited vision. The living church does not harshly judge its brother; remembering that at the judgement we shall be the first to be judged. The modern church must be careful that it does not love its self more than its loves others. The living church recognizes that the action is not behind the pulpit. The action is out there."

The moderator in his 17th annual address was at his best. He gave the profile of youth today. Some of his lingering facts were: "Everyone agrees that today's youth is different. The simplest thing to be considered is that there are so many of them. This more than anything else has given them a sense of power and in turn an impatience to exercise it. Our youth has suddenly surged forth in rebellion and resistance because hypocrisy and injustice appall them."

They are impatient with the defenders of the status quo because they believe that America in general and christianity in particular can do more to make a better place in which to live. Youth shares the predicament of all the people in the world. The adult says to the young people, our

world is your world and neither is to blame the other for its condition. It is not until young people and adults accept the challenge of a common future together and build their lives into a common service to mankind will conflict of the generation disappear.

In the face of great change we must remember that we operate from an unchanging foundation. We believe in a God that does not change in standards of right and wrong. That does not change in a truth that is absolute. Which is forever settled in Jesus Christ and can never pass away."

Many such sermons were given including "A Man and His Money" by The Rev. J. H. Sullivan. The fall session of the association will meet with The Catawba View Missionary Baptist Church of Old Fort. N. C. on November 20, 1969.

WHAT REALLY CEMENTED "MY FAITH IN GOD"

Continued From October Issue

We were married in the beautiful atmosphere of a young minister and his wife, who are the god parents of our son now, we were then and still are deliriously happy. We explored each other as all happy couples do, laughed, played, joked and went on short trips and picnics and thoroughly enjoyed being together. Finally we decided we wanted a baby of our love (Joe said from the beginning it was a boy) and I started through the pregnancy. Other than the usual childhood diseases I had never been ill in my life. About the sixth month I began to feel lifeless and weak, the clinic had said everything was O.K., but by December the doctor ordered me in the hospital. After the usual tests and observations he verified a six month pregnancy, one kidney doing absolutely nothing, an intestinal obstruction and pneumonia rapidly taking over my chest. I cannot remember the number of bottles of fluid, I do remember two units of blood, I barely remember the trips to the operating room to unblock my kidney, the intestinal obstruction was removed with medication instead of surgery, new drugs were given me for pneumonia, because of my condition I could not be given any "hurry up" drugs. Before I became ill my husband and I had tried to be mature enough to discuss all angles of the situation and had decided since I was so small, I've never weighed over 110 pounds; if we lost the baby we would adopt one in its place. However we were praying and hoping for our own. My one concern dur-

(Continued on Page 7)

SUPPORT THE UNIFIED PLAN of the GENERAL BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION OF NORTH CAROLINA, INC.

Dr. J. W. White, President
Dr. O. L. Sherrill, Executive Secretary

BELL HONORED

The 7th Anniversary of the Reverend Asa L. Bell was celebrated at the First Baptist Church, Wadesboro, Sunday, October 26, 1969. The Pastor conducted the regular morning worship service. The anniversary luncheon was served at 1:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Dining Hall. Guest speaker for the occasion was Mrs. J. E. Boswell. Others on the program were: Mrs. A. M. Williams, Mrs. R. B. Price, Mrs. Bernice Gilbert and Mrs. Ada M. Ford.

The anniversary sermon was preached by the Reverend R. T. Gilchrist, pastor of First Baptist Church, Hamlet who was accompanied by his choir. Tributes were rendered on behalf of the Ministerial Alliance of Anson County by the Reverend C. L. Chambers; Community by Mr. J. A. Blount; Zion Missionary Association by Mr. Valonza Horne; Anson-Union Economic Development Commission by Mr. John Huntley; Auxiliaries of the church by Mrs. Dollie Hammond; a lovely gift from the church was presented by Mr. H. M. Royals. Others on the program were: Mr. H. L. Price, Mr. J. R. Marable, Mr. Jay Clark, Mrs. A. M. Williams, Mr. Bennie Smith and Mr. Alexander Hailey.

Committee Chairman: Mrs. A. M. Williams, Mrs. Jewel Butler, Mrs. Carrie Tyson, Mrs. Rita Hasty, Mrs. Martha Blount, Mrs. V. N. Price, Mrs. Sadie Bell, Miss Julia Horne and Mrs. Annie Bonner.

The coordinating Committee for the anniversary: Mrs. Rita Hasty, chairman; Mrs. Carrie Tyson; Mrs. Gladys Walker; Mrs. Flora Hammond; Mrs. Jewel Butler and Mr. Bennie Smith.

The Reverend Bell has given the church, community and the county of Anson seven years of dynamic leadership and service. He holds the A.B. and B.D. degrees from Shaw University, Raleigh. He has studied at several colleges and universities; Master Mason and moderator of the Zion Association; member of the Executive Board of the Zion Sunday School Convention; president of the organization on Community Affairs; he holds a membership in the Anson Good Neighbor Council, N.A.A.-C.P.; Southern Christian Leadership Conference and several other civic and religious organizations.

He is married to the former Miss Melvine Richard of Havelock who is a graduate of Shaw University. She received the M.A. degree from the North Carolina College, Durham, and is presently employed by the Anson County Board of Education.

The Bells are the proud parents of three children: Florita Lenise, 8; Norvita Denise, 5 months and Asa, Jr., 4 years.

What Really Cemented "My Faith In God"

(Continued from Page 6)

ing every waking moment of mine was to feel and see if he was still alive. Both our families are praying people and know nothing but faith in God. Joe had become a Christian and baptized after we started dating, but in faith in God, he acted as if it was nothing new to him. So many days and nights I could barely make out whose face was whose, I was so weak and sick and in the hospital from January 8, 1969, to February 4, 1969, even transferred from one hospital to another. Doctors in doubt, scratching their heads, holding conferences, re-x-raying, re-examining, listening for the baby's heart beat every few minutes. During all of this his heart beat was lost from the doctors only once for about an hour, when they were unblocking my kidney, when the water moved, it was found to never have lost a beat.

Knowing my craving for this child of our own, and the doctors expecting me to abort at any time, our families joined us in a united prayer for a safe recovery for me, a healthy, normal baby for all of us. Our ministers and churches held special prayers for us during worship periods, the doctors were amazed and couldn't understand but kept reporting that the baby was fast asleep and appeared to be progressing satisfactorily. On February 4, 1969, I was released to go home and return to the O. B. Clinic at regular intervals. I was down to 80 pounds and the first trip back I had to be carried in a wheel chair. By the second time I could walk slowly with a supporting arm around me. I had already been told in the doctor's examinations that being so small and close built, the baby would have to be taken at the right time. I could not give natural birth. Finally April arrived and on the 18th I went back in the hospital, one week later April 25, 1969, Joseph Miles Cameron was born. He weighed in at 5 pounds and a few ounces, but loud and clear, and an answer to prayer.

At one point during my illness I understand Joe stood by the bed and said, "It's no telling what God wants this baby to be." I've thanked God over and over for bringing us safely through, the doctors have run and are still running the baby through various tests to see if he is developing according to all normal babies and so far all is well. Somehow our families, ministers, and friends never expected anything but a happy, healthy, normal child, I never did doubt it, I never did see myself dying, I believed God could and would bring us through. If I am ever tempted to doubt, all I have to do is look at the great big smile on Joe's face and the happy gurgle of Joseph Miles to know that God is still in the healing business.

(Editor's Note: Mrs. Cameron is a member of the New Hope Association, New Hope Union Meeting, North East Baptist Church. Her Moderator is Dr. A. D. Moseley; her Pastor, Reverend T. R. Cole.)

The Relevancy Of Organized Religion

(Continued from Page 2)

President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Atlanta, Ga.

Named to head the Foundation-financed committee charged with formulating the "agenda for the future" was Dr. James P. Shannon, former auxiliary bishop of the St. Paul - Minneapolis Archdiocese. Others are: Rev. Robert K. Hudnut, Pastor of St. Luke Presbyterian Church in Wayzata, Minn.; Mark Hanson, Minneapolis, Union Theological Seminary student and delegate to the World Council of Churches at Uppsala, Sweden; Dr. Leon Jick, Dean of Students at Brandeis University in Lexington, Mass.; Sister Mary Luke Tobin, Superior General, Sisters of Loretto, Nerinx, Ky.; Bishop James K. Mathews, United Methodist Church of the United States, Boston, Mass.; and Rabbi Tanenbaum.

Conference Moderator Dr. Arthur McKay, President of McCormick Theological Seminary and of the American Association of Theological Seminaries, summarized the "overriding concerns" of conference participants. He cited a need for "radical revision" of church structures, for "corporate structures stripped down to their bare essentials . . . those things which are for the aggrandizement of the institution *qua* institution are things we had better jettison if it's not already too late." Dr. McKay said that it was the charge of the religious leaders to "inform the conscience of the church and in some measure to participate in the forming of public conscience."

He noted that the participants had called for interreligious efforts to deal with the urban crisis and other national problems, dealing with these "through the use of our investment portfolios, our power to shape public policy and establish national priorities, our power at the polls." To be effective, he said, the churches must cease to be "caught up with the trappings that are not essential to our theological self-understanding, encumbrances in the exercise of mission in a time like this."

"However unsatisfactorily our discussion of an agenda for the future may have jelled," he said, "we kept speaking over and over again of the necessity of finding ways to identify with genuine, human needs: housing, education, war, poverty, world justice and development, the generation gap, the need to find meaningful patterns of reconciliation with the poor, the black, the Latin American, the Appalachian, the Mexican the Indian, the 'third world', the low-income, blue-collar ethnic groups." One of the prime concerns of the committee, he said, will be to draft an agenda that will meaningfully relate organized religion to these concerns.

The conference opened on Monday, October 6, when Dr. Blake presented a paper defending organized religion as an active and effective force in mod-

ern society, a force unjustly attacked and maligned. He cited the practicality of 'organization' in religion, and said that without it, "a religious man, however saintly, would have very limited influence, even upon his contemporaries."

Dr. Davis, ranking expert at Vatican II and England's leading Catholic theologian until he left the priesthood and the Catholic Church in 1966, said that "the present failure of the church — for the church has failed — is its corruption: namely, the fact that the attitudes and actions of those who call themselves Christians and claim to represent Christ do not correspond to the Gospel." He said that the church has and is "resisting the various social revolutions which mark the history of modern western society," and urged Catholics to "actively resist" a continued trend for the church to enforce and preserve its own authority at the expense of effecting change.

Rev. Young, close advisor to the late Dr. Martin Luther King and to Dr. Ralph Abernathy, his successor, charged that church coffers were not tapped sufficiently for the poor. He was strongly supported in this area and others by a contingent of black and youth participants who dominated the last half of the conference. "The relevance of organized religion," Rev. Young asserted, "is still dependent upon a willingness to suffer for what is right."

Rev. Greeley, prolific theology and sociology writer and scholar, cited the irony of modern churches attempting to be "too relevant" in the modern world, of trying too hard to adjust to a modern world, and not hard enough to lead, and anticipate the future. Organized religion is not, however, "in very serious trouble," he said, and "will not cease to be organized, but will be better organized."

Rabbie Tanenbaum stressed the importance of meeting the needs of youth — particularly Jewish young people — within the framework of organized religion. He cited widespread distaste among this element for the "Jewish establishment" and its failings in modern society. Estimating that about half of the activist campus youths are Jewish, he said that these young people resent in the Jewish community an over-organization and a failure to cope with new issues, and called for support in setting up and supporting new agencies to assure dialogue between the establishment and youth.

**SUBSCRIBE NOW TO
THE BAPTIST INFORMER
\$2.00 PER YEAR**

**Send to — The Baptist Informer
603 S. Wilmington St., Raleigh, N. C. 27601**